1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932
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Kusase

834 765 768 will be given beer, and if the deceased woman had any private property, it will be taken away by her relations, but half will be given to her eldest daughter. This refers only to such property as is used by women; any live stock she may have possessed goes to her eldest son. On the day when these things are cast away at the cross-roads, her husband bathes in a decoction of roots (*pɔkɔ-tim*)[1] and shaves his head. 'By doing so he removes the *deat* (uncleanliness.)' He may then resume cohabitation with his wives after the funeral guests have all scattered. A widower is made to undergo an ordeal to see if he has observed this sexual abstinence. He is made to pass through the door of the *zɔŋ* hut. If he has been guilty, he will be beaten by his brother and run away from the town until he comes and begs for forgiveness.

834 It is a worse offence for a widow to commit adultery before her husband's funeral custom is over, than for her to do so during his lifetime, but the latter is also an offence against the land. A husband who commits adultery with a married woman is 'not fit to descend into the valley', i.e. go to war. 'In olden days a young unmarried girl would not have sexual intercourse with any man but the one whom she was going to marry.' To have sexual intercourse with a woman at her own parents' compound is to preclude the possibility of marriage with that woman. 'Even after marriage a man may not do so, he would "spoil" his parents-in-law's compound.'

572 584 The Kusase indulge in a kind of platonic friendship between the sexes known as *saboa*. A wife, with the full knowledge and consent of her husband, has a 'lover' who does little jobs for the husband, but this is only because 'the man wishes to marry her daughter or some girl from his "lover's" section' (compare Nankane, *yi pɔk zabero*); he may not even sit on the same mat as his 'lover').

764 Should a wife die when visiting her own parents, the funeral will be brought back to her husband's village (*ba ne mor kur na*). Her waist-strings, and a little piece of the mat on which the corpse was laid is put in her calabash and carried back to the husband's compound. These will be placed in a room until the day of the funeral, when the piece of mat is thrown away, and the waist-strings buried. If the town where she died is not far away, however, the body itself will be brought home.

787 *Consulting the Soothsayer after a Person's Death*: 'When a man reaches his time and dies, we do not consult, only in case of "a strong death".' Hoes, used in digging graves, have the wooden handles knocked out

[1] These roots are later buried on the kitchen midden (*tampur*).

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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will between parents-in-law and son-in-law. They visit one another regularly, help one another more than the strict letter of custom requires, and are proud of one another. In particular, this positive element in the relationship of affines becomes attached to the brother-in-law (*dakii*); and it is not uncommon for brothers-in-law to be real friends if they live near one another, or belong to allied clans, and if there are no bride-price debts outstanding. In former days a man would protect an affine belonging to another clan from molestation by his own clansmen, in the same way as he protected a kinsman of another clan. I have seen men show deep grief at the death of a parent-in-law or brother-in-law.

On the other hand, the sense of an underlying divergence or even conflict of interests that is so conspicuous in the early stages of a marriage never wholly vanishes. The intercourse of affines always tends to be coloured by the feeling that they might be at strife at any time. This is what makes *deen*, affinity, the arch symbol of all that is most antithetical to *dɔŋam*, consanguinity. A formal distance must be maintained between affines; and the passage of time merely blurs but never obliterates this.

A man must show formal deference to his parents-in-law or their representatives, especially in the early years of marriage, and always in ceremonial situations. When he encounters them, or visits them, he sits down to greet them in the posture of respect—crossed legs (*pʊt nɔba*), bowed and hatless head—adopted before a chief, a high ritual functionary, or an ancestor shrine. He is a 'stranger' in their house and they in his house. He is 'shy' of them, and must be on his best behaviour in their presence. It would be most unmannerly, almost immodest, for father-in-law and son-in-law to eat together. In certain circumstances this attitude is extended to the whole settlement of a father-in-law's clan. For example, one rarely sees a respectable Tongo elder eating bought porridge publicly in the market at Ba'ari or Sii. Partly it is unbecoming for the head of a family, as people might gossip, saying that he had no food at home. But the main reason is that Tongo people marry men and women from Sii and Ba'ari. A Tongo man thinks of these places as the homes of possible or actual affines, and he would feel very ill at ease eating bought porridge publicly in the presence of an affine. When a man's parents-in-law or their representatives come on a visit to his house, he must show them honour (*giem ba*). The officious hospitality showered on a visiting father- or mother-in-law, or anybody representing them, by a son-in-law, and vice versa, makes a totally different impression from the friendly welcome offered to a kinsman from another settlement.

Affines have no axiomatic ties. Their relationship rests on a well-defined jural compact. Their parallel interests in the woman who links them, and in her children, are clearly differentiated. This means that a son-in-law has to make special efforts to keep the goodwill of his

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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Once a smaller boy who was with them hit Maŋŋya. Maŋŋya turned furiously on the small boy; but it was somewhat comical to see Tɛndaanbon equally angry with the assailant. Like many full or half-siblings of about the same age and the same sex, these two boys were extraordinarily alike in character, modelling themselves obviously on their father. They had his blunt and honest habits of speech, his diligence and readiness to oblige, and a sense of responsibility beyond their years.

Until one of them reaches the age of about 9 or 10, and sometimes even after that age, *soog* siblings are frequently together irrespective of sex. That is why one often sees a little girl with a group of small boys, or a little boy with a group of small girls. Between the ages of about 9 and 12 the sexual dichotomy prevailing in Tale culture begins to have a strong influence on the children, as we have seen. Different economic activities divide boys and girls. One rarely finds girls accompanying the herd boys or boys going for firewood with their mothers and sisters. Boys are beginning to share the interests and activities of the men, girls those of the women. Boys go about with their 'mates' (*taab*, sing. *taraan*) or 'chums' (*dɔlɔntaas*, sing. *dɔlɔntaa*) of about the same age, and girls with their girl chums. Boys of 11 and 12 are apt to be rather scornful of girls, and girls of this age turn up their noses at their boy contemporaries. Overtly, their attitudes to one another remind one of the latency phase in European children. Children round about 11 to 13 do not play together much in groups except on special occasions. Girls, in particular, are at home a good deal.

This is the time, therefore, when the sex factor begins to exercise a strong influence on the relations of siblings; age differences also become significant; and with this emerges a distinction between the social aspect of siblingship and the affective, personal aspect. A boy of 11 to 13 may make a boon companion of a half-brother or a classificatory brother from a neighbouring homestead of about his own age, leaving his younger *soog* brother or sister to his or her own devices if the difference between them is considerable. When Koyatee came to see me it was always with one of his chums who belonged to a different branch of his medial lineage, never with his younger *soog* brother or sister.

It is the same with girls at this stage. Ba'anzee's best friend was her classificatory 'daughter' of about her own age from the next homestead. They used to come up to the camp to call on my wife, as they generally announced to me, their arms affectionately round each other's neck. Maanyeya's daily playmate was her classificatory sister of about the same age from a neighbouring homestead—until her mother had a baby who wholly absorbed Maanyeya's delighted attention.

This tendency to seek outside friendships, though still chiefly among siblings of the same inner lineage, increases with the approach of adolescence. From the age of about 14 to 16 up to about 18 to 20 many

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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boys are keenly learning the art of courtship and are experimenting with sex. They have sweethearts (*gab*, pl. *gabnam*), most commonly slightly younger girls of the same clan whom they call 'sisters' in the widest sense. These girls may have serious suitors from other clans, but not being quite ripe for marriage find much more pleasure and excitement in their freer relations with their clan 'brothers'. With them they can indulge in sexual play, not always stopping short of intercourse, without criticism. Now when boys go to visit their sweethearts they often like to have the company of a friend (*zɔ*, pl. *zɔnam*) of about the same age, who has a similar interest in such adventures. For this a boy prefers a friend from another homestead, a not too near classificatory brother, to a close brother. Later on such a pair of friends will help each other in serious courtship, for one cannot carry on a serious courtship without a friend to act as spokesman and go-between. And a distant brother is preferable to a close brother as a friend in affairs of the heart. It helps to keep them secret from the other members of one's family, and that is desirable because it is a point of honour with every young man to find a wife for himself. The same motives operate with girls between the ages of about 13 and marriage at 16 to 18 years of age. A girl likes going to market with a girl friend of about her own age who is equally interested in the young men around. But if a girl is thinking of eloping with a suitor she prefers to confide in her mother or her clan-brother sweetheart. Having no rights in the bride-price they will—for a bribe from the suitor—help her to get away, whereas her own brothers will insist on a marriage by arrangement so as to make sure of the bride-price.

But the divergence of interests and companionship in the years immediately preceding and following adolescence does not disturb the personal intimacy and attachment of *soog* siblings. Custom prescribes that husband and wife should eat separately. So a man eats with one or two of his younger children, and each of his wives eats with one of her younger daughters or an infant. The other children are divided up, one dish of porridge to this pair of boys or that pair of girls or even to a girl and a boy. They may be full siblings or half-siblings, and the porridge they are eating on a particular occasion may be of their mother's co-wife's cooking. Nevertheless, every child continues to think of his own mother as the food-giver and of his *saarɔt* as those with whom he automatically shares food. A boy of 12 does not sleep in his mother's room, yet he still regards her as the source of his sense of emotional security. In a small and harmonious polygynous family the children are almost equally at home in all the women's quarters, but in a large joint family the children of one woman tend to be in her quarters for most of the time that they are indoors.

Of many other signs of the lasting intimacy of full siblings and their closer identification with each other than with their half-siblings, the

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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CHAPTER XII

THE FUNCTIONS OF KINSHIP

OUR study has made it clear that the recognition of genealogical relationships in the ordering of social life has an extremely wide range of application among the Tallensi. To be sure, some classes of social relations in which individuals or organized groups normally participate do not necessarily imply cognizance of genealogical connexions. There are the activities of buyers and sellers in the market-place, for example. These are transactions in which kinship may, but for the most part does not, play a critical part. If it comes into the picture it does so as an adventitious factor, not as an intrinsic constitutive element. Even between kinsfolk transactions in the market are ruled by considerations of price, costs, profits, supply, and demand. A man who goes to market to buy a cap will not patronize a kinsman who has caps for sale if he can get one cheaper from a stranger. But it may happen that a seller of caps will be satisfied with a slightly smaller margin of profit if the buyer is his kinsman than if he is a stranger.

Apart from such ephemeral inter-personal relations, there are lasting social ties, such as those of friendship (*zoot*), which do not necessarily presuppose genealogical connexions. It is a common thing for Tallensi, especially for men, to have friends (*zɔ*, pl. *zɔnam*) in other clans than their own, and nowadays in neighbouring tribes. Friends visit one another occasionally, help one another sometimes, and give one another gifts. A man may also have a woman friend (*sɔm*), usually the wife of one of his clansmen. The man takes small gifts to his *sɔm* from time to time and she reciprocates by cooking a meal for him. She may assist him to find a wife from among her clan sisters. But if friends are not necessarily kinsmen, they very often have common kin. In fact friendships between unrelated Tallensi are most often formed through one of the parties visiting a kinsman of the other party and so making his acquaintance. Many friendships arise from contacts at funeral ceremonies or when hoeing or building parties come to help a father- or brother-in-law. In any case, the commonest and most prized form of friendship is friendship with a clansman or a neighbour of a related clan. Many such friendships go back to childhood and are the more highly prized because they are voluntary, personal, and not subject to hard-and-fast rules.

In the same way, though the Tallensi do not have institutionalized age-grades, men or women of about the same degree of social maturity are often grouped together in situations in which many people of all ages play a part. One sees this very clearly on ceremonial occasions. At funeral ceremonies, for example, there is first of all the usual separation

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